



Department of Justice

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TWO COLOMBIANS ARRAIGNED IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ON TERRORISM AND DRUG CHARGES

WASHINGTON – Two Colombian citizens who were extradited from the Republic of Colombia earlier this week have made their initial appearances in federal court in Washington, D.C., on terrorism and drug charges related to their alleged involvement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), a designated foreign terrorist organization in Colombia.

Jose Maria Corredor-Ibague, 42, a/k/a “Boyaco,” and Carolina Yanave-Rojas, 34, a/k/a “Edilma Morales Loaiza,” a/k/a “La Negra,” were arraigned late yesterday in federal court in the District of Columbia after being extradited to the United States on Tuesday. Both are scheduled to have a detention hearing tomorrow at 1:30 pm before U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler.

The defendants face charges contained in two separate indictments returned in the District of Columbia.

An Oct. 26, 2006 indictment charges Corredor-Ibague with one count of engaging in drug trafficking with the intent to provide something of pecuniary value to a terrorist organization, or narco-terrorism. Corredor-Ibague was the first person in the nation to be indicted under this narco-terrorism statute, which became law in March 2006. Corredor-Ibague is also charged in the indictment with one count of conspiracy to manufacture and distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine, with the intent to import the cocaine into the United States. If convicted of both counts, Corredor-Ibague faces a sentence ranging from a mandatory minimum of 20 years to a maximum of life imprisonment.

Among other things, Corredor-Ibague is alleged to have controlled clandestine airstrips in the jungles of Southern Colombia. From Corredor-Ibague’s airstrips, small aircraft flew out multi-hundred kilogram quantities of cocaine which were destined for the United States, Mexico, Brazil, and Europe. Corredor-Ibague allegedly organized these shipments, manufactured and sold the cocaine, and charged a tax on the cocaine shipments that was paid to the FARC. In addition, incoming flights brought small arms weaponry which was used by the FARC to supply its armed forces.

Yanave-Rojas is charged in the same October 2006 indictment with one-count of conspiracy to manufacture and distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine, with the intent to import the cocaine into the United States. If convicted, she faces a sentence ranging from a mandatory minimum of 10 years to a maximum of life imprisonment.

A second indictment, returned on Nov. 30, 2006, charges both Corredor-Ibague and Yanave-Rojas with three counts: conspiracy to provide material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization; providing material support or resources to a terrorist organization; and aiding and abetting and causing an act to be done.

Specifically, this indictment alleges that between 2002 and 2006, Corredor-Ibague and Yanave-Rojas were involved in a conspiracy to deliver from Colombia cocaine that was produced and controlled by the FARC to neighboring countries, for delivery to the United States. In exchange, the defendants allegedly provided the FARC with AK-47 and AR-15 assault-type weapons, ammunition, foreign currency, and sophisticated communications equipment, including satellite phones and SIM cards, originating from the United States.

If convicted of the three counts in this indictment, Corredor-Ibague and Yanave-Rojas each face a maximum possible sentence of 15 years imprisonment.

Corredor-Ibague and Yanave-Rojas were arrested by Colombian authorities on Oct. 15, 2006. In December 2006, the United States filed a formal request with the Republic of Colombia seeking their extradition on the charges contained in the two indictments. The extradition request was subsequently granted by the Colombian Supreme Court, and then by the Colombian Ministry of Justice and by Colombian President Alvaro Uribe.

The extradition of the defendants earlier this week was achieved through the efforts of attorneys from the Office of International Affairs of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, the Judicial Attaches in the United States Embassy in Bogota, Colombia, and multiple U.S. federal law enforcement agencies.

The investigation that resulted in the October 2006 indictment was led by the Bilateral Case Group of the Special Operations Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). This indictment will be prosecuted by attorneys from the Narcotic and Dangerous Drug Section (NDDS) of the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

The investigation that resulted in the November 2006 indictment was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Miami Field Office, the Pentagon's Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) Southeast Field Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Miami Field Office. This indictment will be prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and trial attorneys from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

The public is reminded that an indictment is merely a formal charging document notifying a defendant of the charges against him or her. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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